

## The Application of The Right Brain Methods : The Association and Correlation Method In Optimizing Vocabulary Mastery at The Seventh Grade Students of SMPN 1 Rancah-Ciamis

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**Abstract :** *This study investigated the application of the right brain methods, namely the association and correlation method in optimizing the students' vocabulary mastery at the seventh grade of SMPN 1 Rancah Ciamis. It uses the qualitative approach by using Classroom Action Research (CAR) to determine how the right brain methods help students in optimizing vocabulary mastery, and to analyze how the students' progress related to the right brain methods in optimizing vocabulary mastery in the seventh grade students of SMPN 1 Rancah. This study is conducted in three cycles, each of which consisted of planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. The data of the study are taken from the questionnaire, observation, interview and the students' vocabulary test in form of multiple choice and students' presentation. Data analysis techniques used are descriptive analysis both qualitatively and quantitatively. The results show that the implementation of the right brain methods, namely the association and correlation method affected positively on the improvement of students' vocabulary mastery. It is based on the enthusiasm and the active participation of the students in the process of teaching and learning, and also the results of students' vocabulary test from pre-cycle to cycle III.*

**Key words:** The right brain method, the association method, the correlation method, vocabulary mastery, action research.

### Introduction

Mastering English is begun by learning its vocabulary because vocabulary is the most important aspect that will become the basic competence in order to get other competences like listening, speaking, reading, and writing. It is also an important part in the process of learning a language. Vocabulary is used by students to express their feelings, ideas, and thoughts. If they cannot master vocabulary, it is impossible for them to speak English or write well even they cannot understand what people say. So, mastering a large number of English vocabularies will make the students easy to master English because it can develop the four English skills.

For the students, there were some barriers in learning English vocabulary. It made students felt confuse because English writing was different with the pronunciation. Therefore, they always made mistake in spelling and pronouncing the words correctly. The students also got difficulties in grasping and memorizing the meaning of the words. They faced to the words that they had never heard before with the new meaning, so the students really had to remember every new meaning they found. Meanwhile, remembering every single of unfamiliar word need a strong memory, but most of students was hard to do that. They even forgot what they had learned before. Finally, they got difficulties in using vocabulary in sentences. Some psychological barriers also

affected the students in mastering English. They lack confidence to express their ideas and thoughts in the class. The students always feel shy and afraid of asking the teacher about their learning difficulties. Therefore, the learning condition is not conducive.

Many ways to be proficient in English, but to find the best one, it should be adapted to the students' character. Students in Junior High School are categorized as young learner. Generally, they tend to imaginative and active. They always relate what they have learned with their experiences. They like an assignment that relate with picture and colour. In addition, they are easy to memorize something but they are also easy to forget it. Thus, they need the right brain method to learn English well. These right brain methods can be used in teaching vocabulary to make the teaching learning process much interesting and fun. The researcher believes it will increase the students' interest in learning process in the classroom because students will be free to explore their ability creatively. By activating the right brain, these methods are appropriate for those who wish to be proficient in a foreign language. Thus, the students who learn foreign language will be easier and get the best results.

### **Review Of Literature**

In this section, the writer discusses some relevant theories concerning a brief overview of vocabulary mastery, the characteristic of young learners, and the right brain methods. In general, students interpret vocabulary as a matter of words that people use and know. Hornby (1987) states that "vocabulary is the total numbers of words in a language and vocabulary is a list of words with their meanings". Every individual uses some words to express their ideas, thoughts, and feelings. This vocabulary is also

used not only for speaking but also writing, hearing, and comprehending other conversation. According to Richards (2002), vocabulary is the main component to master a language and it is as basic for learner who wants to speak, listen, read, and write well. A linguist, Nation (1990) also notes that "vocabulary is not an end in itself, a rich vocabulary makes the skill of listening, speaking, reading, and writing easier to perform". It means that foreign language learners have to master large number of vocabularies first so that they are able to speak, write, and listen well.

Vocabulary is the basis element that has a direct impact for learners to master a language as whole. In listening ability, vocabulary helps learner to comprehend the conversation of other speakers. In speaking ability, it helps learner to express their ideas, feelings and thoughts orally. In reading ability, vocabulary allows the learners to comprehend the meaning of the words in the text, and in writing ability, vocabulary enables the learners to extend their ideas depend on the topic they want to write. Therefore, vocabulary is the key for learners to get the four skills that enables them to understand what they heard and read, and to communicate successfully both oral and written.

In short, learning vocabulary is such complex processes that involve the mental process. When learners store many vocabularies in their mind, they have to be able to remember the vocabulary to be used based on the context and situation because the final goal is using the words itself in receptive way and productive way. Schmitt, in Ching Yi (2008), suggests that "words must be met and used multiple times to be truly learned". Thus, it is very important for learners to use the vocabulary they have learned in their daily conversation and find out many

ways in mastering vocabulary based on the learners' characteristics and the learners' need.

Teaching young learner surely is different from adult learner. According to Halliwell (1992), children have a good skill in interpreting the meaning without understanding individual word. They are able to use limited language creatively and create fun and pleasure activities so that they prefer to learn indirectly rather than directly. Scott and Yteberg (1998) add that "young learners are full of imagination even sometimes they are difficult to distinguish their real world with their imaginary world". In this case, they involve their emotion too much. Their understanding comes through hands, eyes, and ears. They learn something through body movements, from what they see, what they hear, what they touch, so they use their physical world and several senses dominantly.

Memorizing vocabulary one word by one word is not good idea to improve vocabulary, especially for young learner. They can be said to be easy to remember something, but there is no doubt they also tend to be easy to forget it. Therefore, it needs some creative methods which make the young learners more fun in learning process to master vocabulary easily. The association and correlation method are the right brain methods. These methods can improve memory because it maximizes the right brain work. The methods emphasize on the imagination and multy sensory, so the right brain memory is capable of storing information in a very fast, precise, and accurate. As Stockwell, cited in Dryden and Vos (1999), states that "to learn anything fast and effectively, you have to see it, hear it, and feel it". Therefore, these methods are appropriate to overcome the young learner problems relate to the lack of vocabulary mastery.

The association and correlation method are the right brain method that focus on the strategy in receiving, storing, and processing the information. The association method is the process of replacing the new information to familiar things in order it is easy to be remembered. Commonly, this method uses imagination, picture, and the learners' sense. As Sesep and Handayani (2012) state that "association is a link in the memory about people or things, the establishment of a relationship between ideas, memories, or sense activities".

Association method is divided into two parts: picture association and rhyme association (Gunawan, 2012). Picture association means the learners use their visual or image to associate the new information. In this case, the learners change the abstract information to the concrete thing. It is easy for learners to remember because the concrete things are easier to be drawn in their brain. Meanwhile, rhyme association is an important technique that is often used. In this technique, learners change new information or abstract word to the concrete one by using the rhyme or by looking for the word that have sound alike. So, when learners learn new English vocabulary, they associate it with the same sound of their language. Associating something with strong image will improve the learners' ability in recalling the data.

Association method is not the only way to improve brain ability in recalling some information. The association method is usually accompanied by correlation method, after learners associate their new vocabulary to the concrete thing by using image or rhyme, they correlate it with the real meaning by using a keyword to make it becomes meaningful.

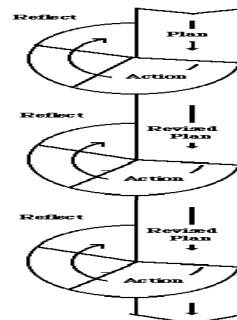
Gunawan (2012, P.42) states that “correlation method is a memorizing method that connects one word into another by using an action or activity”. In this case, an action becomes a keyword that should be understood. In addition, in this method, it needs another elements such as colours, size, and sound, so learners can minimize or maximize the things they imagined, make it more colourful, and surely make it more alive. Then, the word becomes more powerful because it is accepted easily by subconscious mind. As conclusion, through the association and correlation method, entering and processing the information is done appropriately; as result, learner can retrieve it easily.

### Research Method

The method used in this research was an action research. The researcher choosed action research because she wanted to prove the use of the association and correlation methods in optimizing vocabulary mastery of young learner, and to make better the teaching of vocabulary using the right brain method especially in the seventh grade students of SMPN 1 Rancih. There are four steps cydes in conducting classrom action research: planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. Kemmis (1990) has

developed a simple model of process in action research; it is written in the figure below:

### CYCLE



To do this research, the researcher conducted three cydes of action which was given in six meetings or activities. One meeting was 40 minutes and English lesson was divided to be 3 meetings in a week with duration 80 minutes per meeting. The choosng of the time was based on the curriculum and the schedule at school that the material related to vocabulary mastery conducted at that time. The activities of three cydes could be seen in the action plan as follows;

### Action Plan

Cycle	Date	Goal	Indicator	Activity
1	5 & 6 April 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Introduce the students how to associate vocabulary by using brain storming</li> <li>- Make the students easier in using the association and correlation method</li> <li>- Can improve the students' vocabulary</li> </ul>	<p>The students are able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Associate the word fast and creatively</li> <li>- Remember vocabulary fast and easily</li> <li>- Participate in teacher's</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Brain gym exercise</li> <li>- Explain how the right brain worked and how to use association and correlation method</li> <li>- Practice to associate the word by using brain storming</li> <li>- Do the vocabulary</li> </ul>

		mastery	explanation - Get the score above the standard minimum criteria (75)	test
<b>2</b>	13 & 14 April 2015	- Learn to focus by using the right brain - Optimize the students' multy sensory and enhance memory - Improve the students' vocabulary mastery	The students are able to: - Associate the word fast and creatively - Remember vocabulary fast and easily - Participate in teacher's explanation - Get the score above the standard minimum criteria (75)	- Brain gym exercise - Learn to focus by using the rightbrain - Practice to memorize vocabulary by using the association and correlation method - Do the vocabulary test
<b>3</b>	16 & 20 April 2015	- Make the students familiar in using their multy sensory - Enhance the students' memory - Improve the students' vocabulary mastery	The students are able to: - Associate the word fast and creatively - Remember vocabulary fast and easily - Participate in teacher's explanation - Get the score above the standard minimum criteria (75)	- Brain gym exercise - Make dairy by using the right brain - Practice to memorize vocabulary by using the association and correlation method - Do the vocabulary test

To support this research, the all participants of this research was the seventh grade students of SMPN 1 Rancah-Ciamis, but the researcher only used one dass to determine the pilot participant as chosen purposively. To

take the supporting data of the research participants, the researcher asked collaborators to observe the dassroom when the teaching and learning process going on. The researcher wanted to check and take notes about the

students' activities, the students' responses during teaching and learning processes, the students' activities in vocabulary test and exercises, and the students' achievement in their vocabulary skill.

The data in this research was the students' text, video presentation and the students' documentation. The data was obtained from four sources, including classroom observations, questionnaires, interview, and students' video presentation gathered from the test throughout the teaching-learning activities. The data were analyzed descriptively. The data from questionnaire and interview were analyzed to know about their perception in the application of the association and correlation methods in teaching vocabulary mastery. Classroom observation also analyzed descriptively to know the students condition during teaching and learning process, so the researcher and observer could look at the students' progress toward the application of the association and correlation method to enhance their vocabulary mastery. Then, the data from observation compared to the data from questionnaire and interview to get a complete view of the implementation of the association and correlation method in teaching vocabulary.

## **Research Findings**

### **A. Findings**

This classroom action research was conducted into three cycles besides the pre-cycle. The research consisted of pre-cycle, cycle I, cycle II and cycle III. Each cycle consisted of four steps: planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. Pre-cycle meeting was conducted at the beginning of the research. The purpose of this meeting was to find out the students' ability in mastering vocabulary. In this cycle, the teacher taught students vocabulary without using

strategy. The researcher explained the material, gave the example, asked students to read loudly, made a list of unfamiliar words, and asked them to memorize it manually, then administered a test.

Based on the observation in this activity, the researcher found some facts that happened in the classroom during in English lesson. In teaching learning process, the students were not active to ask the teacher related to the material. The students were not interested in and felt bored during the English lesson. They just kept silent and did the exercise from the teacher without understanding the point of the material. Besides that, they were difficult to present in the front of the class because of their less confidence. There were only a few students or thirty five percent students who were active and enthusiastic. In this cycle, most of the students had difficulties in memorizing vocabulary, even they were often forget about the material that had been learned. It could be seen from their presentation and test in multiple choice, they consumed much time to remember the words that would be spoken, and the results of the test in multiple choice was not fulfilled the standard competency, it is only 61.7. Meanwhile, the standard minimum criteria for the English subject was 75.

In the first cycle, the students practice this method through brain storming. The students was given some words and they had to write on the paper every idea, picture, or symbol that existed in their mind so that they could find the appropriate association and make them more creative in making association. There were half students or fifty five percent students were enthusiastic and active doing the process of teaching and learning. The average of the students test in form of multiple choice was

72.8; meanwhile, the maximum score was 86 and the minimum score was 60. It means that the data showed a little improvement although it did not reach the standard minimum criteria.

In the cycle II, the researcher gave more exercises to train the students' imagination and train their right brain to think imaginatively by focused learning. This exercise is designed especially for improving focus, concentration, and balancing the power of right brain and left brain. Focus and concentration are needed to keep the students' mind on the track when studying something and not easily influenced or split by another situation. Focus and concentration will make their learning more effective and efficient. In the second cycle, the classroom atmosphere in learning process is more lively; 75% students looked more curious and active. Based on the students' scores in form of multiple choice in cycle II, the average of the students' results was 88.7. It means that the data showed an improvement and could reach above the standard minimum criteria.

In the cycle III, the researcher designed the next step of learning vocabulary by exercising right brain imagination, namely making daily journal. It was hoped that the students could exercise their right brain imagination and their memory continually so that they could make

association from unfamiliar word and memorizing easily. The majority of students (90% students) joined the teaching and learning process actively and enthusiastic in doing the vocabulary test. It could be seen while the researcher was presenting and previewing the lesson, they were more active and paying attention enthusiastically. The average of the students' results was 94.6, while the maximum score was 100 and the minimum score was 80. It means that the data showed an improvement and could reach above the standard minimum criteria.

Based on the analysis of the whole cycle, it could be seen that there was progress from pre-cycle to cycle I, cycle II, and cycle III related to the right brain methods in optimizing students' vocabulary mastery. The students' progress on vocabulary mastery could be seen from the classroom observation and students' test in form of multiple choice and speaking test. The students' progress could be seen in the following table:

**Table 1. Comparison the Results of Observation on Cycle I, Cycle II, and Cycle III**

NO	CYCLE	TOTAL SCORE	PERCENTAGE
1	Pre-cycle	7	35%
2	Cycle I	11	55%
3	Cycle II	15	75%
4	Cycle III	18	90%

Based on the analysis of whole cycle in the table, there were significant improvement from pre-cycle to cycle III related with the students' participation in teaching and learning process. In pre-cycle, when the researcher still used conventional method or did not use the right brain method, only 35% students were active and enthusiastic to the lesson. In cycle I, after the right brain methods applied, half students (55%) were active and joined the class

enthusiastically. In cycle II and cycle III, the students also showed the same results, the scores of students' participation from observational sheets had increased, from 75% to 90%. Majority of students had enjoyed their teaching and learning process. Thus, the classroom atmosphere in learning process was more lively.

The improvement of students' vocabulary mastery could be seen in the following table:

**Table 2**  
**Comparison the Average of Students Scores in Form of Multiple Choice on Pre-Cycle, Cycle I, Cycle II, and Cycle III**

NO	CYCLE	MEAN
1	Pre-cycle	61.7
2	Cycle I	72.8
3	Cycle II	88.7
4	Cycle III	94.6

**Table 3**  
**Comparison the Students' Speaking Scores on Pre-Cycle, Cycle I, Cycle II, and Cycle III**

No	Cycle	Category			
		Advance Performance (4)	Meet Standard (3)	Approaching (2)	Beginning (1)
1	Pre-cycle			91.3%	8.7%
2	Cycle I		17.4%	73.9%	8.7%
3	Cycle II		65%	35%	
4	Cycle III	43%	57%		



In the pre-cycle test, all of the students did the vocabulary test in form of multiple choice, and the average results was 61.7. The students also did presentation in which almost students, they were 91.3% in approaching category. They used limited vocabulary and expression but they tried to communicate. In the cycle I, the average results of students test in form of multiple choice increased become 72.8, but it did not meet the standard criteria. The students showed an improvement one step forward, there were 17.4% students had met standard where they had used a variety of vocabulary and expression with clear pronunciation and intonation, even though they still made some errors in word choice.

In the cycle II, the average of students score results in form of multiple choice was 88.7. In the cycle III, the average of students score result was 94.6. It means that there was an improvement in students' achievement. The results of students' presentation also showed the same results. There was improvement in the students speaking skill, even though it was not too significant. In the cycle III, the students had increased their speaking skill to advance performance, there were almost half students or 43% students. And the rest, there were 57% students in meet standard category. This was a good achievement for them and a pride of their hard learning.

## **B. Discussions**

The association and correlation method is an effective way in teaching vocabulary because this method uses multi sensory in recalling vocabulary. This is related with the theory as listed by Stockwel, in Dryden (1999). He states that to learn anything fast and effectively, you have to see it, hear it and feel it. The multi sensory owned by human will make them easy to

create imagination creatively that will lead them to success in recalling information. This thing also supported by Buzan (2013) that association method will help the brain to make relation of ideas by linking something that will be studied with something already known, and the creativity is a key to form imagination in the mental image that then it will retain the information easily.

Regarding the application of this method, Cohen and Apek (1980) mention some steps in doing this method. First, the students are required to associate the foreign word with the sound alike the native word or with the information they already known. The word that has been associated will be the keyword that links it with the new information. Second, the students are required to enter the keyword to their mental image, so the new information is easy to be recalled and retained. Then, this explanation becomes a principal for some researchers in applying the association method to increase the students' vocabulary mastery.

Everything needs a process. It is the general expression that often heard. As well as the application of this method, teachers cannot promise the instant success to students by using association and correlation method in increasing their vocabulary mastery. Basically, the students have their own learning strategy, and it is better for teachers to apply the methods step by step in order they can follow it easily.

Emphasizing on the learning process, it is better to involve the students' interest in the learning activities. As Peter Kline said that learning is most effective when it is fun. Refers to this statement, some interesting activities should be designed to keep their mind on the subject. Therefore, in applying the association and correlation method, the writer provided some activities to exercise and activate the

students' right brain when they were applying the method. They were brain storming, focused training, and making daily journal. It is related with the theory as listed by Buzan (2013) and Hagwood (2007) that brain storming, focus training, and making daily journal are designed for right brain exercises. These exercises will lead students to apply the right brain methods easily.

The association and correlation method may give a great effect in learning vocabulary, but the process of learning itself has prominent role in determining the learners' success. In applying this method, creative ways are needed to help learners achieving their goals to increase their vocabulary mastery. Making association by using their multy sensory is not easy for some left- handed learners. They required hard effort to make it become automatic when they found some foreign words to be recalled. If the learners whose the left brain more dominant are forced to learn something by using the right brain, it will make them feel stressed and cause bad learning results. So, the teachers are required to be more sensitives on the learners' needs and condition, and provide some creative activities that stimulate their right brain. As the results, learners could apply the association and correlation method easily to increase their vocabulary mastery, so their learning difficulties can be overcome.

## **Conclusions and Suggestions**

### **A. Conclusions**

Based on the results of the data analysis and discussions, the researcher draws some points in condusion. The implementation of the right brain methods, i. e. the association and correlation method can optimize the students' vocabulary mastery at the seventh grade of SMPN 1 Rancah. There are three steps of how

the right brain methods can help students in optimizing their vocabulary. They are brain storming, focus training, and making daily journal. The strategy is applied systematically. One strategy is applied in one cyde, so students can apply it step by step to optimize their right brain. These strategies are really help students to develop their mind and knowledge by using their right brain, so they can make association for unfamiliar word easily. For the results, they can master vocabulary and make students become autonomous learner.

Dealing with the students' progress, there is significant improvement relate to the right brain methods in optimizing students' vocabulary mastery, not only on their academic scores, but also on their behavior to the lesson. It can be seen from the comparison between the average score results of pre-cyde, cyde I, cyde II, and cyde III. In addition, the students' progress in mastering vocabulary by using the right brain method can be seen from the percentage of students' speaking skill. There is also good improvement.

Related to the students' attitude or behavior to the lesson, there are some positive progress that support them in mastering vocabulary. The right brain method can create more comfortable atmosphere inside the dass. During the teaching and learning process, the students are more active, enthusiastic and also interested in taking a part in the lesson. They are not shy anymore and they are highly motivated to join the instructional process. It also increases their confidence. It can be seen from their bravery in presenting material to reflect certain vocabulary meaning. As the final results, they can remember the meaning of the words easily.

## B. Suggestions

The researcher would like to give suggestions related to this research which will hopefully be useful for other English teachers in junior high school and other researchers. The suggestions are as follows:

### 1. For other English teachers

The teachers should be able to find the most suitable technique or method to be applied in the teaching and learning process. It becomes the important point as the key of success for the students in learning. The teacher should make a supporting classroom atmosphere as interesting as possible. It means that they can enjoy and relax in learning English without feeling reluctant to be involved into the lesson conducted. In applying the right brain methods, namely the association and correlation method itself in English teaching, English teacher should support students to have commitment in doing the right brain strategies such as brain storming, focused training, and making daily journal to

make them easy in applying the methods and become autonomous learners. Teacher should also think about the lesson sequence consisting of orientation, time allotment, guided practice, and independent practice in order to make the instructional process run well.

### 2. For other researchers

In this research, the researcher explained the implementation of the right brain method toward vocabulary mastery more general. The researcher does not explain it more detail, such as how to apply the method to noun, verb, and so forth. Thus, the other researcher should do the research relate to the application of the right brain methods on vocabulary mastery more details. And it is better if other researchers also examine and develop other right brain methods to optimize students' vocabulary mastery.

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